

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE THEATER COMMANDER: PLANNING FOR CONFLICT TERMINATION

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ABSTRACT

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The goal of every theater commander during conflict is to bring that conflict to an end on favorable terms. This truth alone makes conflict termination critically important; and yet, history has shown that this task is often misunderstood and seldom executed correctly. This paper discusses the conflict termination responsibilities of the theater commander in broad scope, lists some key considerations that the commander should refer to during conflict planning and execution, discusses the importance of the interagency process for national security policy-making, and most importantly, shows that current doctrine, although improving, remains insufficient in assisting the commander during his important task of planning for conflict termination. Recommendations to current planning processes are made to ensure that the theater commander focuses on conflict termination throughout the spectrum of planning.

THE THEATER COMMANDER: PLANNING FOR CONFLICT TERMINATION

Desert Storm Vignette

After the parades and celebrations were over, however, the Bush administration found that the war had not really ended. CENTCOM's war in the desert was over, but the confrontation between Washington and Bagdad persisted.¹

Pre-dawn on the morning of 24 February 1991, Lieutenant General Walt Boomer received the order to cross the line of departure and begin the ground war. The Marines were expected to fix the enemy in place while the Army conducted the wide left hook, thus flanking the Iraqi forces and allowing few to escape. Initial Marine speed of advance was underestimated and General Norman Schwarzkopf adjusted his plan. Army forces, scheduled to begin their attack a day later, would now begin at 1500 on 24 February.² The rapid success of the Marines forced the Iraqi forces to flee northward. Consequently, many Iraqis, including much of the Republican Guard were able to escape into Iraq before the crushing Army blow fell upon them.

With the Iraqis fleeing and world opinion grumbling about unnecessary slaughter of Iraqi forces, the Bush administration decided to end the conflict. The objective of getting the Iraqis out of Kuwait was achieved, so the war was ended at the 100 hour mark. Many tactical commanders were shocked, but no commander had challenged General Schwarzkopf in his recommendation to the National Command Authority (NCA).³ Now the most significant phase would begin. The military victory was complete, but negotiations must begin in order to conclude a political victory.

General Schwarzkopf was the coalition military theater commander and now represented the coalition in negotiations to achieve the political desired end state. General Schwarzkopf's after-action report stated, "The rapid success of the ground campaign and our subsequent occupation of Iraq were not fully anticipated. Thus, some of the necessary follow-on actions were not ready for implementation."⁴ General Schwarzkopf had not sufficiently considered how the conflict would terminate and what would be required once the fighting stopped.

The success of Desert Storm militarily was astounding, but Saddam Hussein reminded the world for the next twelve years that the political victory was incomplete. In April 2003, Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) completed the task of ousting Saddam Hussein, but a political victory in Iraq remains unsecured today. If military doctrine better illustrated how the theater commander should plan for conflict termination (and repetitively reminded him to do so), then perhaps the desired end state would have been achieved earlier and/or more easily.

Introduction

The goal of every theater commander during conflict is to bring that conflict to an end on favorable terms. This truth alone makes conflict termination critically important; and yet, history has shown that this task is often misunderstood and seldom correctly executed. Current joint and service doctrine has improved by discussing conflict termination, but still remains insufficient as a primary source upon which the theater commander and his staff can refer to during conflict planning and execution.

With respect to conflict termination, this paper discusses the responsibilities of the theater commander in broad scope (phases and backwards planning), lists some key considerations that the theater commander should incorporate in planning and execution, discusses the importance of the interagency process for national security policy-making, and most importantly, shows that current doctrine is improving, but remains insufficient in assisting the commander during his important task of planning for conflict termination. Current military doctrine clearly focuses the commander on how to fight a war, but must be further adapted to include specifics on how to end a war. Lastly, recommendations to the current planning processes (contingency planning and crisis action planning)⁵ are offered to ensure that the theater commander focuses on conflict termination throughout the spectrum of planning.

Phases and Backwards Planning

The theater commander is responsible for planning and executing all phases of a military conflict including termination of that conflict. He must work closely with the President of the United States (POTUS), the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF), and other interagency personnel to ensure military objectives support the political objectives, and thus lead to the desired end state. The military role following the conflict termination is usually substantive to include conducting negotiations and post-hostility operations, often called the stability and reconstruction phase or now referred to as phase IV (stabilize) and phase V (enable civil authority).⁶ How the conflict is fought bears directly on the phases that follow. Therefore, it is essential that the theater commander know what the desired end state is before he plans how to conduct the conflict itself. Failure to execute this backwards planning cycle can easily lead to military victory without long-term political success as illustrated in the Desert Storm Vignette. However, experience has shown that the theater commander may not get a clear end state from POTUS and/or SECDEF. If this is the case - and it usually is - the commander must make the best educated guess at what he believes the political end state is, and then, he must share this vision with POTUS/SECDEF (bottom up, vice top down approach).

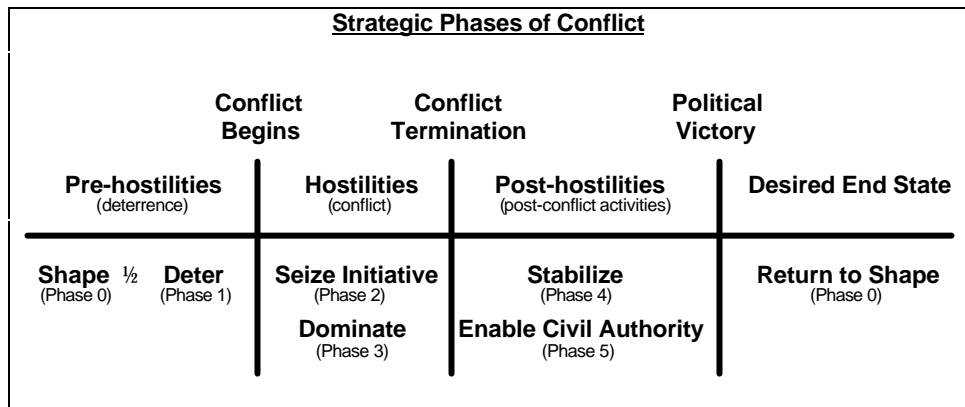


FIGURE 1⁷

The tremendous importance of the two-way communication channel that must be established between POTUS/SECDEF and the theater commander cannot be overstated. The theater commander should not begin the first stage of pre-hostility actions (see Fig. 1) without considering what POTUS/SECDEF want the end state to look like. Clausewitz knew this nearly two centuries ago by stating that one should not take the first step in war without considering the last.⁸ Liddel Hart said, "...it is essential to conduct war with constant regard to the peace you desire."⁹ In direct conflict to these premises, Fred Ikle reminds us that historically many war plans pay little, if any, attention to their desired endings.¹⁰ This demonstrates that even though historians generally recognize the importance of backwards planning, many planners fail to properly execute the backwards planning process. Planning for the end state requires significant effort and includes many considerations surrounding conflict termination.

Conflict Termination Considerations

Why do we often fail in conflict termination? Several considerations exist which make ending a conflict difficult and which limit rational calculations in conflict termination. Costs/benefits analysis, victory disease, social dimensions, coalitions, and negotiations are among the most important considerations.

Clausewitz correctly proposed that when the costs of a war exceed the benefits that can be attained, that country should end the war.¹¹ However, it is very difficult for a country to recognize the location of this point. Stopping the conflict could end without the achievement of the political objectives; however, continuing the conflict could raise the costs (or risks) without having ensured a political victory. The theater commander should weigh costs versus benefits when considering conflict termination, and then make a recommendation via SECDEF for a

decision from POTUS. Clear dialogue is required between these three key leaders.

Unfortunately, wartime costs and benefits are very difficult to measure and their assessments and comparisons are subjective in nature.¹² Therefore, both the military and political leadership face significant difficulties in weighing the options for conflict termination.

Another reason why conflict termination is difficult is victory disease. When one side has the momentum, often that side increases its aims. If the desired end state is changed, then the military objectives must be changed as well. The theater commander cannot conduct sound conflict termination when the desired goals continue to escalate. Crossing the 38th parallel in Korea following the success at Inchon is an example of victory disease. Perhaps the sudden termination of Desert Storm demonstrates the inverse of victory disease, in that, POTUS/SECDEF and General Schwarzkopf feared letting success decide the plan for the future. This demonstrates again the significance of clear dialogue between POTUS/SECDEF and the theater commander.

A corollary to victory disease and a third significant reason that war is difficult to stop is found in the social dimensions of nations. Prestige, political careers, and passions of the people all influence the decision to terminate a conflict. For example, the news reports about slaughtering the Iraqi forces while they withdrew northwards (the infamous highway of death) and the desire to hold down American casualties helped persuade the Bush administration to end Desert Storm.¹³ Here the military objectives of containing the Iraqi regime and destroying the Republican Guard had not been met which probably meant that the political end state would not be achieved; and yet, the social dimensions (passions) helped influence conflict termination.

Coalitions can make conflict termination very difficult as well. Since fighting is for a desired end state, that end state must be the same (or a least similar) for all coalition members to want to terminate the conflict simultaneously. Additionally, each objective must be decided by all members of the coalition. This can make harmony nearly impossible. During Desert Shield/Desert Storm, General Schwarzkopf did a remarkable job coordinating the actions and desires of numerous coalition members. Convincing a coalition partner to continue fighting if his objectives have already been met is challenging. From the Desert Storm example, perhaps General Schwarzkopf recommended halting offensive operations because he knew most of the Muslim coalition members would not continue to fight once Kuwait had been liberated (attacking Muslim brothers in Iraq was not amenable). Thus, along with the advantages of coalitions come disadvantages which could include making conflict termination more difficult for the theater commander.

The last difficulty that will be discussed is conflict termination negotiations. The theater commander is usually directly involved in conflict termination negotiations. He may have to negotiate prior to, during, and/or after conflict termination. Conflict termination negotiations certainly affect the post-hostilities phase of conflict, but also directly influence the desired end state itself. The theater commander should recommend (or decide himself if given that authority) whether to fight while negotiating, go beyond the desired objectives to gain bargaining power, and/or conduct an operational pause. Again, the communication channel between POTUS/ SECDEF and the theater commander is critical. The Korean War provides an excellent example of conflict termination negotiating. During the many months of conflict termination negotiating with the North Koreans, General Ridgway made different recommendations at separate times to Presidents Truman and Eisenhower. Sometimes, the United Nations' forces continued fighting in an attempt to gain bargaining power, and at other times, operational pauses were used to provide the peace negotiations a different environmental perspective.¹⁴

Interagency Coordination

The theater commander relies upon the interagency process to formulate the political end state and to provide resources for the conduct of hostilities, and perhaps more importantly, for the conduct of post-hostilities. Therefore, interagency coordination is critical to reaching the political end state by way of a theater commander's well-crafted conflict termination. POTUS requires a quality interagency process to ensure that the United States (US) national security policy is the best policy possible. By looking at several characteristics affecting the interagency process, a better understanding of how theater commanders rely on clear national security guidance and support when planning and executing conflict termination and follow-on phases is gained.

Ends, ways, and means are the key factors that any policy-making body should examine before making or recommending decisions. Ends are the political objectives desired; ways are the strategic concepts, courses of action, or how the ends are to be accomplished; means are the resources available to accomplish the objectives.¹⁵ When making or recommending policy, the interagency system must examine all three of these key factors and ensure that Art Lykke's "stool" remains balanced: the imbalance generated by too little or too great of ends, ways, or means (the length of the stool legs) is associated with the risk for that particular policy.¹⁶ Persuading multiple agencies with separate interests to agree or compromise on what an objective should be, on the method to pursue the objective, and on what resources are available

and should be allocated is a difficult task. It takes skilled negotiators and compromise to build consensus, especially when the risk of failure has significant consequences (national security implications).

Unity of effort among role-playing agencies is required to design and execute national security policy. Diverging interests, personalities, and cultures constantly work against unity of effort. Interagency diversity "...with each agency having its own culture, hierarchy, bias, misconceptions, and unique perspectives, makes unity of effort difficult."¹⁷ However, if properly led, it is these same differences that, through dialogue, work in concert to develop the best possible policy options. Properly led is a key element. Unity of command among the various agencies is required to keep work effort and decision recommendations on-track. Because US national cabinet agencies and other supporting governmental and non-governmental agencies have different interests, a clearly designated leader/agency to guide the dialogue and drive it toward a national policy decision is required. In his *Joint Force Quarterly* article, Matthew Bogdanos said that the US interagency process today "...expects unity of effort without unity of command,"¹⁸ but has often failed to achieve the integrated effort required.

Lack of unity of effort and/or command at the national level is seen as a key problem resulting in weak or slow policy development. The reason for this is there is no agency or body charged with integrating and synchronizing the efforts of all national agencies beneath POTUS level. OIF provides a superb example of this problem. During the planning for OIF in 2001-2002, neither the Department of Defense (DoD) nor the Department of State (DoS) was officially tasked to lead the post-hostility operations until it was too late to fully integrate a viable plan. Therefore, the necessary control and direction of the interagency process did not exist, and the US entered Iraq without a feasible, interagency-coordinated, post-hostility stabilization and reconstruction plan. Executing a conflict termination correctly is more difficult when its effects upon an undetermined reconstruction plan are not known.

Another characteristic of sound interagency productivity is time. Especially in today's world of globalization, the tempo of actions and information has exponentially increased. This enormous increase in tempo requires speedy policy decisions and reactions. However, the US interagency process is somewhat awkward and slow by its nature. Using Policy Coordinating Committees, the Deputies Committee, the Principals Committee, and the National Security Council to vet policy vertically and horizontally is a slow process, especially when world focus at each level is required. Quickening the interagency policymaking and decision-making processes are critical for success in the future high-tempo, globalized world because the theater commander will have to react more quickly while at the same time requiring input from these

processes. Especially during a crisis, the theater commander needs a speedy, unifying interagency effort and rapid POTUS/SECDEF directions and decisions in order to complete planning and begin execution.

Finally, preventing “stovepiping” within agencies during interagency policy development and execution is important. Cultures and interests tend to focus an agency on itself. If planning is not conducted between separate agencies, then it is not interagency effort. By not sharing ideas, the interagency process is stifled, dialogue ceases, and effective unified policies may not materialize. Bert Tussing and Kent Butts in their Center for Strategic Leadership Issue Paper stated, “As a result, parallel but separate agency concerns ripe for synergistic gains remain isolated, with no means of orchestrating limited ways and means towards the most effective set of ends in our strategies....”¹⁹ General Peter Pace, the current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), said, “But once the President decides to do something, our government goes back into its stovepipes for execution – Department of State does what they do, DoD does what we do, the Department of Treasury etc.”²⁰ Both DoS and DoD worked in “stovepiped” fashion when planning the Saddam Hussein regime change for OIF. DoS had extensive research outlining many problem areas during post-hostilities; and yet, DoD either did not receive or ignored this information.²¹ For example, Tom Warrick led a DoS project called the ‘Future of Iraq’ which gathered the expertise of many Iraqi exiles for use in a postwar Iraq and which included important post-hostility information such as public health, water, agriculture, finance, justice, and public outreach assessments; however, because the study was largely research and not directly actionable information, DoD elected to plan independently from DoS efforts.²²

Several recommendations for improvement to the US interagency process have been proposed including legislation for a Goldwater-Nichols-like change, assignment of a supported/supporting relationship among agencies during policy development and implementation, shifting to a more regionalized focus for interagency productivity, and/or giving more interagency power to our current military combatant commanders. Detailed discussion of these options for improvement to the current interagency process is beyond the scope of this conflict termination paper, but suffice it to say that change is required. The need for the theater commander to get clear policy, guidance, and resources from the national security interagency process is crucial and his planning should not be guided by military termination alone, but his operational plans must set the stage for continued US interaction by peaceful means.²³

Doctrinal Publications

The theater commander has a plethora of publications for use as resources. How do doctrinal publications assist the theater commander in planning for conflict termination? A review of doctrinal publications is necessary in order to determine this. First, a detailed look at joint publications' contributions to conflict termination planning is made, and then, an overview of individual service doctrine contributions follows.

Joint Publication 3-0 (JP 3-0), *Doctrine for Joint Operations*. This publication is a comprehensive document that addresses most aspects of warfighting at the different levels of war. It discusses the strategic environment within which joint operations take place, lists the fundamental principles of joint operations, covers planning guidance for war and Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW), describes the considerations for the conduct of joint operations during war, provides principles for MOOTW, and discusses considerations for multinational operations. It reminds the commander that "Properly conceived termination criteria are key to ensuring that victories achieved with military forces endure."²⁴ Knowing how and when to terminate a conflict is part of operational art with strategic consequences. Most importantly, the commander is specifically told that conflict termination is "an essential link between national security strategy, NMS, and end state conditions - the desired outcome."²⁵ Before forces are committed, commanders must know how POTUS/SECDEF intend to terminate the operation and ensure its outcomes endure; and then, theater commanders can determine how to implement that strategic design at the operational level. This makes conflict termination both science and art. Thus, commanders must consider the conditions necessary to bring operations to a favorable end by translating political aims into strategy and operational design. Additionally, post-conflict activities become another burden of the theater commander because it is his job to facilitate the transition from military conflict to a lasting peace.²⁶

JP 3-0 is an outstanding publication when considering conflict termination planning and execution. The next version of JP 3-0 is currently in second draft, and it further develops early planning and interagency coordination as keys to examining a solid plan for conflict termination.²⁷ The new draft version provides better insight into the importance of interagency coordination and the methods in which to accomplish that coordination. Additionally, it specifically reminds the combatant commander to "...work closely with the civilian leadership in ensuring a clearly defined end state is established."²⁸

The national political leadership and the theater commander have dual responsibilities. It is incumbent upon POTUS/SECDEF to give the theater commander a clear picture of the end state that is desired prior to the conflict commencing. Reciprocally, the theater commander

must inform POTUS/SECDEF of critical information that is required to reassess political and military goals. For example, the condition of friendly and enemy forces, morale, and military success probability are items that POTUS/SECDEF require in order to reassess the political objectives of the conflict. Costs, risks, and benefits are continuously reevaluated at the strategic and operational levels of war. Overall, JP 3-0 tells the theater commander to consider conflict termination before and during planning for the conflict, and also gives him multiple considerations to contemplate while making his plan for a conflict.²⁹

Joint Publication 5-0 (JP 5-0), *Doctrine for Planning Joint Operations*. JP 5-0 covers joint operation planning processes and concepts, discusses strategic direction and integration, addresses both deliberate and crisis action planning, and covers the relationship between joint operation planning and assessment. It clearly defines three separate types of planning (campaign planning, deliberate planning, and crisis action planning) and shows how they are interrelated.³⁰ Deliberate (now called contingency) planning and crisis action planning (CAP) are broken down into separate phases. These individual, but interrelated, phases are discussed in some detail providing the commander and his staff a guide for conflict planning. However, nowhere in the five-phase deliberate (contingency) planning process or in the six-phase CAP process is conflict termination directly addressed. Hence, as the authors of a 1995 *Joint Force Quarterly* article on war termination planning noted, “Anyone using JOPES and in need of clarification on termination criteria will not find it in Pub 5-0.”³¹ The third draft revision of JP 5-0 is published for review, and it does not provide any additional conflict termination guidance. However, it does substantially improve the organization and responsibilities section and adds a section on interagency considerations.³²

Joint Publication 5-00.1 (JP 5-00.1) *Joint Doctrine for Campaign Planning*. This joint publication provides guidance and principles for campaign level planning and is specifically focused for theater commanders and joint force levels.³³ It reiterates other joint publications in its efforts to ensure military planning is not conducted in isolation of other governmental interagency efforts seeking the achievement of national strategic objectives.³⁴ It reminds staffs that strategic guidance is the primary driving factor for contingency planning.³⁵ JP 5-00.1 states, “The strategic guidance must establish whether the combatant commander is to pursue a limited or unlimited strategic (political) objective.”³⁶ Similarly, the combatant commander must understand the conflict termination criteria for the campaign. The combatant commander should directly request further guidance or clarification if POTUS/SECDEF have not adequately articulated the conflict termination criteria.³⁷

Of particular importance, JP 5-00.1 gives planners a wide variety of operational issues that must be considered when addressing conflict termination.³⁸ JP 5-00.1 stresses that keeping conflict termination as a key aspect of the planning process and emphasizing backward planning to ensure that conflict termination is considered early are vital planning lessons.³⁹ Chapters III and IV detail the contingency and CAP processes, respectively. Importantly however, as each phase of each planning process is discussed, conflict termination reminders are not found. Overall, JP 5-00.1 provides a superb sub-section on conflict termination, but falls short in detail by not ensuring the planners at each phase of contingency planning or CAP re-evaluate conflict termination and its implications.

Joint Publication 5-00.2 (JP 5-00.2) *Joint Task Force Planning Guidance and Procedures*. This publication details information concerning establishment, organization, and staffing of a Joint Task Force (JTF). It describes functions and responsibilities of the JTF staff directorates. Specifically, chapter IX is dedicated to JTF plans and policy. In addition to outlining the organization and responsibilities of the J-5, this chapter focuses on joint planning processes to include campaign planning, contingency planning, and CAP.⁴⁰ Included in the chapter are valuable planning checklists for the J-5 or others to use. Conflict termination planning and an associated checklist are included. Planners are reminded that conflict termination planning must be ongoing throughout all phases of operations to include initial course of action development.⁴¹ The checklist provided is a great tool for the commander and planners. Its focus on end state, post-conflict requirements to include security planning, redeployment of forces, transition planning, and other expectations help remind planners to consider important elements.⁴² The follow-on transition planning sub-section provides additional considerations for operational planners. Although making huge strides in the right direction, still an actual planning sequence and conflict termination considerations throughout all phases of planning are not detailed in this publication. This publication is clearly written for the JTF Commander and his planning team, however, the conflict termination concepts and planning details should still be emphasized because success or failure at the JTF level can affect the theater commander's conflict termination plan.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual 3122.01 (CJCSM 3122.01), *Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) Volume I (Planning Policies and Procedures)*. CJCSM 3122.01 is the replacement document to Joint Publication 5-03.1, *Joint Operation Planning and Execution System Volume I – Planning Policies and Procedures*, which has been discontinued. It provides specific guidance and doctrine to combatant commanders and other joint force commanders in preparing appropriate plans in response to predicted or

crisis action conflicts. In the new adaptive planning process, the operational commander has 6-12 months of time in which to plan (the old deliberate planning cycle allowed 18-24 months time to plan).⁴³ CAP is very similar, however, but is time compressed due to the crisis situation. Time available for planning may only be hours or days. CJCSM 3122.01 provides a good checklist for CAP which correlates with the six phases of a crisis.⁴⁴ Because CAP is time sensitive, a checklist of this type is very helpful. Again however, no direct reference to conflict termination or to POTUS/SECDEF and theater commander liaison concerning conflict termination is made in the checklist.

Individual Service Doctrine. Operational planners at Combatant Commands (COCOMs) primarily rely on joint doctrine to assist and guide them through the joint planning processes. However, for most officers, assignments to a COCOM as a joint planner will be their first joint assignment and very few will have had exposure to joint doctrine. Therefore, it is important to review how the individual services' doctrine addresses conflict termination, because it is service doctrine to which joint planners have had the greatest exposure.

US Army Doctrinal Publications. The Army doctrinal publications continue to show improvement in conflict termination considerations. Field Manual 3-0 (FM 3-0), *Operations*, is the US Army's keystone doctrine for full-spectrum operations and replaced the vintage FM 100-5. This publication provides the best strategic overview of any service doctrine; it is the only service publication that specifically states that the political objectives may be multi-national in nature.⁴⁵ Commanders need to understand and use all instruments of national power with military efforts to achieve political objectives through dynamic strategic capabilities.⁴⁶ However, the section on planning fails to mention conflict termination. It discusses phasing, branches and sequels, concept of operations, and risk management, but falls short in directing operational commanders to remain focused on the end state.⁴⁷ In the "Follow-On Operations" section, FM 3-0 has a brief sub-section on conflict termination and reminds commanders and staffs to consider conflict termination requirements when developing campaign plans, but is inadequate in listing or describing what conflict termination requirements might be.⁴⁸

Field Manual 5-0 (FM 5-0), *Army Planning and Orders Production*, is the common reference publication for planning in the US Army. It provides the fundamentals of planning based on tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) and draws upon the military decision making process (MDMP) for formatting and evaluating plans.⁴⁹ This publication repeats what other planning publications already say, but includes sections describing the nature of planning, key planning concepts, digital enhancements to planning, and effective planning analysis. Most valuable is that it does guide the commander to focus his Commander's Intent on a desired end

state. However, FM 5-0 does not consider backwards planning to incorporate conflict termination throughout all phases of planning.

US Marine Corps Doctrinal Publications. The Marine Corps doctrinal publications have made significant improvements over earlier versions when addressing conflict termination. Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication (MCDP 1-2), *Campaigning*, supersedes Fleet Marine Force Manual 1-1 and includes an entire section on conflict termination. *Campaigning* tells the planner that two of the most important aspects of campaign design are to define the desired end state and to plan a transition to post-conflict operations; hence, every military action eventually ends through some kind of termination strategy.⁵⁰ Political leaders must make the decision when to terminate combat operations, but military leaders must be participants in the decision-making process.⁵¹ Additionally, MCDP 1-2 tells staffs and commanders that planning for conflict termination begins at the earliest possible moment and continues throughout the campaign progression. The question of what constitutes an acceptable political and military end state is raised and planners are reminded that if the political end state is not achieved, then military operations may have to be resumed.⁵² Risk is always associated with conflict termination and commanders must address a plethora of operational issues including disengagement, force protection, transition to post-conflict operations, and reconstitution and redeployment.⁵³ Overall, MCDP 1-2 provides sufficient conflict termination planning reminders, but similar to many joint publications, it fails to take the next step by providing phased checklists and planning methodology that includes conflict termination planning criteria throughout.

Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 5 (MCDP 5), *Planning*, describes the theory and philosophy of US Marine Corps military planning. It progresses through the nature of planning, planning theory, and effective planning. MCDP 5 details differences in contingency and rapid planning as well as forward and reverse planning. It states, "In practice, planning effectively often means combining the two methods, simultaneously forward planning to provide an idea of what is feasible in the short term and reverse planning to provide a point of aim over the long term."⁵⁴ Although politics in the military commander's decisions and planning processes are emphasized, MCDP 5 stresses the military end state during the planning, not the political one. Conflict termination planning focus remains lacking overall.

US Navy Doctrinal Publications. The Navy doctrinal publications are the least useful when looking for conflict termination planning considerations. Neither Navy Doctrinal Publication 1 (NDP 1), *Naval Warfare*, nor Navy Doctrinal Publication 5 (NDP 5), *Naval Planning*, provides any substantive material useful to theater commanders or their planners regarding conflict termination. NDP 1 describes the Navy's warfighting philosophy, and the

authors state that protracted war causes high casualties and unwanted political and economic consequences; therefore, the key goal is to rapidly conclude hostilities.⁵⁵ NDP 1 fails to assist the commander in planning for conflict termination other than recommending that he achieve a rapid victory. NDP-5 stresses that success in warfare is dependent upon sound planning.⁵⁶ It states that the National Security Council is responsible for assisting the President in directing US Armed Forces in execution of planning and military action.⁵⁷ NDP-5 explains that JOPES is the principal process within DoD for translating policy decisions into operational plans supporting national security objectives.⁵⁸ It goes on to state, "JOPES utilizes two distinct processes: the Deliberate [contingency] Planning Process and the Crisis Action Planning Process."⁵⁹ Further, NDP-5 describes naval component planning in support of unified combatant commanders through direction of a Naval Component Commander. However, NDP-5 fails to focus any planning effort on conflict termination considerations.

US Air Force Doctrinal Publications. The Air Force doctrinal publications show some improvement over the US Navy publications. Air Force Doctrine Document 1 (AFDD 1), *Air Force Basic Doctrine*, is a summary of the US Air Force basic doctrine. It gives general guidance for the application of air and space forces across the full-spectrum of conflict from nuclear or conventional warfare to MOOTW. Its purpose is to form the basis from which Air Force commanders plan and execute their assigned air and space missions.⁶⁰ Further, AFDD 1 describes the relationship between policy, strategy, and doctrine by stating, "Victory in war is not measured by casualties inflicted, battles won or lost, number of tanks destroyed, or territory occupied, but by the achievement of (or failure to achieve) national policy objectives."⁶¹ The centerpiece argument expressed in Air Force doctrine is that air and space power offer national leadership an alternative to the annihilation and attrition warfare of the past,⁶² but AFDD 1 fails to connect the commander directly with the importance of conflict termination planning. AFDD 1 merely sells the reader on the capabilities of air and space.

Air Force Doctrine Document 2 (AFDD 2), *Organization and Employment of Aerospace Power*, is the capstone document of the Air Force operational doctrine series. AFDD 2 is a companion document to AFDD 1 focusing on how the Air Force organizes and employs aerospace power throughout the spectrum of conflict.⁶³ It contains a section on conflict termination which reminds planners that conflict termination is a vital aspect of tying military actions to strategic objectives. AFDD 2 states that hostilities will normally cease by one of three ways: by the victor imposing his will using force until the vanquished gives up or surrenders, through negotiated settlement, or by third party settlement imposition.⁶⁴ It further states, "Termination planning should establish the conditions and detail the actions needed to attain the

chosen national security goals and objectives.”⁶⁵ Additionally, AFDD 2 reminds the planner that termination planning needs to begin prior to the conflict itself; however, this task is difficult and often requires multiple revisions to termination plans because of the changing nature of the conflict or the changing political objectives. Overall, AFDD 2 does a good job reminding commanders and staff of the importance of early planning for conflict termination, but it remains general guidance and does not provide planning checklists or methodology for planning.

Since individual service doctrine is where officers learn TTPs, the service doctrine needs to emphasize critical concepts and basic planning procedures including that of conflict termination. In general, individual military service doctrine is not adequate in providing conflict termination considerations throughout the planning processes. Joint publications, especially JP 3-0 and JP 5-00.2, are much better in giving the theater commander and his staff guidance in planning for conflict termination, but these same personnel must begin their education through their individual services.

The 1995 *Joint Forces Quarterly* war termination article states that JOPES is the process that is used by joint planners to integrate policy decisions with military planning and execution at national, theater, and supporting organizational levels.⁶⁶ Therefore, JOPES should facilitate contingency and CAP planning by providing operational planners with detailed checklists at each phase of planning. CJCSM 3122.01 attempts to provide planners a planning checklist, but noticeably absent from the publication is specific considerations about conflict termination in each phase of the planning processes. Since theater commanders lose experienced planners regularly as officers rotate from staff planning positions, military doctrine needs to provide sufficient detail to assist new planners in properly planning for conflict termination. Detailed checklists which include conflict termination considerations and criteria for each phase of the operation will provide the outline that theater commanders require for successful staff planning.

Contingency planning is not normally time sensitive. Therefore, a theater commander and his planners have more time to refer to the multitude of publications, thus reminding themselves of the critical nature of conflict termination. However, CAP does not necessarily afford the commander and his staff the time required to read through several publications to digest the importance of early and continuous planning for conflict termination. Therefore, a critical weakness in the CAP process is that no clear outline for conflict termination is given to the commander in military doctrine.

Summation of Key Points

- The theater commander functions as the link between the strategic and operational levels of war. A key ingredient in a military plan attempting to achieve a political victory is the art of conflict termination. The theater commander's decision on when and how to execute hostilities and conflict termination weigh on post-hostility operations and whether or not the political objectives are achieved.
- Conflict termination must be planned for early and continuously. The backwards planning approach assists the theater commander in conflict termination and in the planning for post-hostility operations. Everything depends upon the political desired end state. All phases of planning for conflict and the execution of the conflict itself must be devised and assessed with the political desired end state in mind.
- There is a compelling requirement for POTUS/SECDEF to clearly express the political desired end state to the theater commander. Reciprocally, the theater commander should express his military plan and how it will help achieve the political objectives to POTUS/ SECDEF, including how the theater commander proposes to terminate the conflict. This two-way communication channel must remain open and must be used continuously to ensure both military and political successes.
- The US national security interagency policymaking system is currently without unity of effort and unity of command. Multiple options exist for improved interagency cooperation and coordination. Most important is that a change be made to clearly delineate an agency or an individual beneath the President to take command of the interagency process.
- Conflict termination is a process, not a distinct phase. Many believe that by making it a separate and distinct phase of the strategic phases of conflict that the importance of conflict termination will be properly emphasized.⁶⁷ The argument here is that conflict termination is too important to be subordinated under other aspects in the planning process. However, conflict termination planning is a continuum, and therefore, it should not be only considered during one particular phase.⁶⁸
- The military must be mindful that conflict termination and the end to hostilities are not the end to their tasks. The theater commander is responsible for military integration into post-hostility actions as well, and may be assigned as the lead agency for the post-hostility phase as is seen in the current conflict in Iraq. This vital phase is often the most difficult and includes transitioning control from the military to DoS, non-governmental organizations, private voluntary organizations, and/or a new host-nation government.

- Individual service doctrine is important because it provides officers with their primary education. In general, individual service publications do not offer enough detail about conflict termination planning. No service publication has planning checklists or detailed phase planning criteria. Latest versions of each publication are improvements, but more emphasis on conflict termination and how to conduct it still remains insufficient in service doctrine.
- The contingency planning process is not normally time critical, so significant changes need not be made in order to deal with conflict termination. JP 3-0, other joint publications, and especially CJCSM 3122.01 offer the theater commander and his staff sufficient guidance in planning for conflict termination as long as time allows the review. However, CAP is time sensitive, so changes to the CAP checklists should be made to remind the commander to plan early and continuously for conflict termination. US military doctrine embraces the key concepts of conflict termination, but fails to give the theater commander the methods to accomplish it or the checklists to guide staffs through planning for it. To assist planners, detailed checklists for all phases of planning should be promulgated and conflict termination criteria should be listed for each phase.

Recommendations

- Make conflict termination the subject matter of an annex to all operation plans and operation orders. Similar to an intelligence plan or a logistics plan, conflict termination is a process which exists throughout all phases of planning and execution. In order to emphasize the importance of conflict termination to the theater commander and to remind him to continuously think of conflict termination as a process, a conflict termination annex is justified.
- Amend CJCSM 3122.01 so that it includes specific references to conflict termination planning and considerations during each phase of CAP. Responsibilities for conflict termination by POTUS/SECDEF and the theater commander can be clearly delineated in this manual. Specific conflict termination criteria should be listed for planners to review.
- Reemphasize the importance of conflict termination criteria in all service schools and in service doctrinal publications. Single service action during a conflict, though unlikely, is possible, especially at the tactical level. Tactical level operations can have significant impact on the operational and strategic plans. Additionally, the military officer corps' initial education is founded in individual service doctrine, and it is from there that officers

develop and may eventually serve a joint tour. Therefore, service publications should echo joint publications in their detail and emphasis of conflict termination considerations.

Conclusion

The relationship between conflict termination and conflict resolution determines the ultimate value of the fighting (and dying) in which the military engages.⁶⁹ The theater commander is the link between the operational campaign and the strategic political objectives. Therefore, his role in planning and executing conflict termination is critical to achieving the US national objectives. Since the interagency supports the theater commander in his conflict planning, execution, and termination, the process must be streamlined and made more responsive. Additionally, by improving both joint and individual service publications with respect to detailed conflict termination criteria and checklists, the theater commander and his staff will be better able to accomplish the lofty and always difficult task of planning and executing conflict termination in support of US national objectives. Wars will always be easier to start than they are to conclude. The time to help theater commanders and their planners better conclude wars (conflict termination) is now.

Endnotes

¹ Michael R. Gordon and General Bernard E. Trainor, *The General's War: The Inside Story of the Conflict in the Gulf* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1995), 490.

² Ibid., 363.

³ Ibid. National Command Authority (NCA) is a term that is no longer used today. The NCA included the President of the United States and the Secretary of Defense. This paper will not use this term except where directly referenced from older source documents or publications. The President of the United States (POTUS) and the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) will be used as the personnel from whom theater commanders receive their guidance. This entity is referenced at POTUS/SECDEF.

⁴ Ibid., 515.

⁵ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 5-0 Revision Third Draft (JP 5-0 Draft), *Doctrine for Planning Joint Operations* (Washington, D.C.: 25 January 2002), I-13. Deliberate planning is the official published terminology in JP 5-0, but JP-5.0 Draft has renamed this process as contingency planning. Therefore, this paper uses the newer term – contingency planning where possible.

⁶ Ibid., IV-33.

⁷ Figure 1 is derived in part from an in-class seminar discussion led by Professor Elizabeth McIntyre at the Naval War College for Seminar #9, Operations Department, November 1997.

Additionally, Figure 1 is derived from the operational plan phases as written in JP 5-0 Draft, IV-31.

⁸ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 579.

⁹ B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy* (2nd revised edition) (New York: Penguin Group, 1991), 353.

¹⁰ Fred Charles Ikle, *Every War Must End* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 108.

¹¹ Clausewitz, 91.

¹² K.R. Sorfleet, Colonel Canadian Forces, "Conflict Termination: Implications for Military Officers," *Defence Studies* 1 (Spring 2001), 69.

¹³ Gordon, 476.

¹⁴ Donald W. Boose, Jr., "The Korean War Truce Talks: A Study in Conflict Termination," *Parameters* Vol XXX, No. 1 (Spring 2000), 113.

¹⁵ H. Richard Yarger, "Toward A Theory of Strategy: Art Lykke and The Army War College Strategy Model," *USAWC Selected Readings for Theory of War and Strategy, Vol I* (Academic Year 2006), 9.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ David Tucker, "The RMA and the Interagency: Ignorance and Sloth?" *Parameters* Vol XXX, No. 3 (Autumn 2000), 66.

¹⁸ Matthew F. Bogdanos, "Joint Interagency Cooperation: The First Step," *Joint Force Quarterly* 37 (2d Quarter 2005), 15.

¹⁹ Bert B. Tussing and Kent Hughes Butts, "Aligning the Interagency Process for the War on Terrorism," in *The Annual Collins Center Senior Symposium: Center for Strategic Leadership Issue Paper* (U.S. Army War College, June 2005), 1.

²⁰ Jim Garamone, "Pace Proposes Interagency Goldwater-Nichols Act," American Forces Information Service News Articles, 7 September 2004; available from http://www.dod.gov/news/Sep2004/n09072004_2004090707.html; Internet; accessed 6 November 2005.

²¹ Donald R. Drechsler, "Reconstructing the Interagency Process after Iraq," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 28 (February 2005), 5-8.

²² Ibid., 7-8.

²³ John R. Boule II, "Operational Planning and Conflict Termination," *Joint Force Quarterly* 29 (Autumn 2001 – Winter 2002), 98.

²⁴ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-0 (JP 3-0), *Doctrine for Joint Operations* (Washington, D.C.: 1 February 1995), I-10.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., I-12.

²⁷ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-0 Revision Second Draft (JP 3-0 Draft), *Doctrine for Joint Operations* (Washington, D.C.: 9 May 2005), I-17.

²⁸ Ibid., IV-2.

²⁹ JP 3-0, I-10 – I-11.

³⁰ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 5-0 (JP 5-0), *Doctrine for Planning Joint Operations* (Washington, D.C.: 13 April 1995), vii-ix.

³¹ Robert R. Soucy II, Kevin A. Shwedo, and John S. Haven II, "War Termination and Joint Planning," *Joint Force Quarterly* (Summer 1995): 98.

³² JP 5-0 Draft, II-11.

³³ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 5-00.1 (JP 5-00.1), *Joint Doctrine for Campaign Planning* (Washington, D.C.: 25 January 2002), i.

³⁴ Ibid., vii.

³⁵ Ibid., xi.

³⁶ Ibid., II-2.

³⁷ Ibid., II-4.

³⁸ Ibid., II-4 – II-5.

³⁹ Ibid., II-5.

⁴⁰ U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 5-00.2 (JP 5-00.2), *Joint Task Force Planning Guidance and Procedures* (Washington, D.C.: 13 January 1999), IX-1.

⁴¹ Ibid., IX-54.

⁴² Ibid., IX-54 – IX-55.

⁴³ Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual 3122.01 (CJCSM 3122.01), *Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) Volume I (Planning Policies and Procedures)* (Washington, D.C.: 14 July 2000), C-4.

⁴⁴ Ibid., Enclosure G.

⁴⁵ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-0 (FM 3-0), *Operations* (Washington, D.C.: 14 June 2001), 2-2.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 2-18.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 6-1 – 6-6.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 6-21.

⁴⁹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual 5-0 (FM 5-0), *Army Planning and Orders Production* (Washington, D.C.: 20 January 2005), v.

⁵⁰ U.S. Marine Corps, Department of the Navy, Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1-2 (MCDP 1-2), *Campaigning* (Washington, D.C.: 1 August 1997), 50.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., 51.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ U.S. Marine Corps, Department of the Navy, Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 5 (MCDP 5), *Planning* (Washington, D.C.: 21 July 1997), 48.

⁵⁵ U.S. Navy Department, Navy Doctrinal Publication 1 (NDP 1), *Naval Warfare* (Washington, D.C.: 28 March 1994), 35.

⁵⁶ U.S. Navy Department, Navy Doctrinal Publication 5 (NDP 5), *Naval Planning* (Washington, D.C.: 15 January 1996), 12.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 23.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 27.

⁶⁰ U.S. Department of the Air Force, Air Force Doctrine Document 1 (AFDD 1), *Air Force Basic Doctrine* (Washington, D.C.: 17 November 2003), vii.

⁶¹ Ibid., 14.

⁶² Ibid., 17.

⁶³ U.S. Department of the Air Force, Air Force Doctrine Document 2 (AFDD 2), *Organization and Employment of Aerospace Power* (Washington, D.C.: 17 February 2000), i.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 9.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 10.

⁶⁶ Soucy, 98.

⁶⁷ James W. Reed, "Should Deterrence Fail: War Termination in Campaign Planning," *Parameters* Vol XXIII, No. 2 (Summer 1993), 49.

⁶⁸ C.L. Scovel, "The Operational Commander and War Termination: Assessing The Bridge From War To Peace," Unpublished Research Paper (Newport, RI: U.S. Naval War College, Operations Department, 1993), 21.

⁶⁹ Christopher Tuck, "Conflict Termination in Iraq," *RUSI Journal* 149 (October 2004), 24.